

## THE USES OF MAKE BELIEVE

SINCE the appearance in 1970 of *Beyond Reductionism*, edited by Arthur Koestler and J. R. Smythies, reductionism has been a distinctly unpopular cause. That book—and the work of other writers, before and since its publication—attacked the assumption that the phenomena of life could all be reduced to mechanistic events in the processes of physics and chemistry, and the allied contention that human intelligence and thought are no more than responses to external stimuli.

Yet reduction may nonetheless have value in other relations. The institutions which dominate our lives certainly need reduction in importance, and their complexities would produce far less confusion in our minds if they could be understood in simpler terms. What seems a useful step in this direction was taken by an eminent historian, Edmund S. Morgan, in "Government by Fiction" in the Spring *Yale Review*. Cherished notions sanctified by optimistic patriots of the eighteenth century fall into fragments from the impact of what he says, beginning—

Government requires make-believe. Make believe that the king is divine or that he can do no wrong, make believe that the voice of the people is the voice of God. Make believe that the people *have* a voice or that the representatives of the people *are* the people. Make believe that governors are the servants of the people. Make believe that all men are equal or make believe that they are not.

On the surface these declarations seem full of shock and scandal, yet one reads them with little more than a sighing reaction. Why? Because, as the writer immediately points out, we cannot live without these fictions, and often "take pains to prevent their collapse by moving the facts to fit them, by making our world conform more closely to what we want it to be." And when we use the fictions to reshape political or social reality, we name the result "reform or reformation."

Prof. Morgan explains how the fictions work:

In popular governments—governments wherein authority derives from people rather than from God—the fictions that enable the few to govern the many exalt, not the governors, but the people governed. And just as the exaltation of the king could be a means of controlling him, so the exaltation of the people can be a means of controlling *them*. Popular government is a much more complicated matter than kingly government and requires more complex fictions to sustain it. It requires us to believe, or act as if we believe, that the people, as a people, can make decisions and perform actions apart from their government, that they can authorize individuals to act in their name and can also limit, instruct, or otherwise control those individuals. To endow the people with these fictional powers was a delicate matter for those who first undertook it, because it had to be done without encouraging the simpleminded to mistake fiction for fact. A too-plausible, too-persuasive argument for popular authority might result in what was always deplored as "confusion"—that is, for the people (or rather some fraction of them) to take direct action in matters that were best left to their superiors. The men who first promoted popular government did not think they were striving for a government by the many over the many. They had strong ideas about who should govern, and they did not, to begin with at least, propose to meddle with the structure of societies in which they themselves commanded positions near the top. In locating the source of authority in the people, they thought to locate its exercise in themselves. They intended to speak for a sovereign but silent people as the king had hitherto spoken for a sovereign but silent God. . . .

After 1776, when all government in America was presumed to rest on the people, the change from royal to popular authority came about, in effect, as it later did in England (and had done briefly in the 1640s), by representative assemblies taking full command. Popular government in both England and America had been representative government, and representation is the principal fiction by which the larger fiction of popular sovereignty has been itself maintained.

While resistance to centralized government—as an instrument of control by men of wealth—such as Shay's Rebellion in 1786, against the heavy taxation of farmers in Massachusetts, was strong, the desire for stability and order was stronger. Speaking for the Federalists at the Constitutional Convention, Jonathan Smith, from the Berkshire Hills in Massachusetts, declared:

" . . . I don't think worse of the Constitution because lawyers, and men of learning, and moneyed men, are fond of it. I don't suspect that they want to get into Congress, and abuse their power. . . . Some gentlemen think that our liberty and property are not safe in the hands of moneyed men, and men of learning. I am not of that mind."

Fear of what "mobbish state assemblies" might do carried the day. As Prof. Morgan says:

It was touch and go whether Americans would accept the new configuration of fictions. Anti-federalists cried out that the new representation was no representation at all, that national representatives would be too remote from their constituents, no better than the specious representatives the colonists had been told they had in Parliament. But the Anti-federalists lost. Americans suspended their disbelief. The idea of representation recovered the fictional qualities it had been losing in the state governments, and the few were thereby enabled to govern the many without recourse to violence. The fictions of popular sovereignty embodied in the federal Constitution may have strained credulity, but they did not break it. Madison's invention worked. It still does.

Yet this analysis is only half the story. There were other fictions contending for acceptance, chief of which was the claim that only direct rule by the "power of the people" would bring freedom to all. And the ultimate fiction, perhaps, was and is that only the "right" form of government can solve such problems. Meanwhile, it is evident enough that *some* government is needed. The issue then turns on what may be legitimately expected from government of even the best sort, and we are no closer to an answer to this question than the political thinkers of the past. Hannah Arendt makes this clear in *On Revolution*:

If there was anything which the constitution-makers of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries had

in common with their American ancestors in the eighteenth century, it was a mistrust in power as such, and this mistrust was perhaps even more pronounced in the New World than it ever had been in the old countries. That man by his very nature is "unfit to be trusted with unlimited power," that those who wield power are likely to turn into "ravenous beasts of prey," that government is necessary in order to restrain man and his drive for power and, therefore, is (as Madison put it) a "reflection upon human nature"—these were commonplaces in the eighteenth century no less than in the nineteenth, and they were deeply ingrained in the minds of the Founding Fathers. All this stands behind the bill of rights, and it formed the general agreement on the absolute necessity of constitutional government in the sense of limited government; and yet, for the American development it was not decisive. The founders' fear of too much power in government was checked by their great awareness of the enormous dangers to the rights and liberties of the citizen that would arise from within society. Hence, according to Madison, "it is of great importance in a republic, not only to guard the Society against the oppression of the rulers; but to guard one part of the society against the injustice of the other part," to save "the rights of individuals, or of the minority . . . from interested combinations of the majority."

It becomes evident that unless the makers of constitutions have a clear idea of the various possibilities of "human nature"—both good and bad—they will make messes instead of plans that provide a measure of order. The conflict between freedom and order does not originate in constitutions but in human nature, and all that legal conventions can accomplish is some delay in the way in which that conflict emerges in human affairs and arrangements. The anarchist position is that it is better to live with the facts, whatever they are, than to try to cope with such slippery and ambiguous fictions. Because of the ring of sincerity and courage in this outlook, anarchist thinkers keep attracting followers, although fear of a fictional element in anarchist belief—that humans can actually live in society without strong ruling authority—makes their numbers small.

Political criticism lives almost entirely on the mysteries and conflicts in human nature. It seems fair to say, judging from the quality of their minds

and their hardly profitable devotion to the welfare of all in the new republic that the Founding Fathers were not men in whom self-interest dominated. Yet since self-interest came to pervade the economic affairs of America, it was perhaps natural to look upon their works with suspicion. As Hannah Arendt puts it:

We need only remember how, until very recently, the historiography of the American Revolution, under the towering influence of Charles Beard's *Economic Interpretation of the Constitution of the United States* (1913), was obsessed by the unmasking of the Founding Fathers and by the hunt for ulterior motives in the making of the Constitution. This effort was all the more significant as there were hardly any facts to back up the forgone conclusions. It was a matter of sheer "history of ideas"—as though America's scholars and intellectuals, when in the beginning of this century she emerged from her isolation, felt they must at least repeat in ink and print what in other countries had been written in blood.

It was the war on hypocrisy that transformed Robespierre's dictatorship into the Reign of Terror, and the outstanding characteristic of this period was the self-purging of the rulers.

There is of course a ground of truth behind any fiction that is able to gain belief and support, the question needing attention being: How much? To become functional in social life, the fiction must be believed in, but if it is accepted without any attention to the counter-fictions of opposing views, disaster is bound to result. The politician, then—one who knows what he is about—uses the drama of the prevailing fiction without exposing the threat of its excesses. Yet he may do this as either a charlatan or a patient paternalist. He may be either a calculating liar or an educator able to work with a set of illusions in ways that do the least harm. But if he takes part in public life, he *must* make use of illusions, although his integrity may lead him to give carefully restrained warnings on rare occasions. There is no use in addressing multitudes in language filled with the abstractions of maturity—which in a sense is disillusionment; multitudes cannot understand them. A wise leader will rather put the practical meaning of those

abstractions in simple, objective terms—usually the terms of ethics, to which the intuitions of the people may respond.

But whatever he says, it will reduce the idea of the importance of government. The only hope of a durable resolution of the problems and issues of government lies in the individuals involved, in self-ordering and self-reform. Government is no more than a massive allegory of the problems of human nature, yet difficult to understand in this way because social conflicts abstract, isolate, and distort the motives of individuals, seeming to color public events all white or all black, when they are actually a mechanical aggregate of coarsened human intentions.

Understanding politics and government is always the result of a slow process of disillusionment. A good example of this is the transformation in the thinking of the Indian leader, Jayaprakash Narayan, recorded in his pamphlet—really a letter to his political colleagues, expanded to more than fifty pages—*From Socialism to Sarvodaya*, published by Sarva Seva Sangh (Wardha, Bombay State) in 1957, JP, as he was popularly known, wrote this pamphlet to explain why he had retired from politics and joined with Vinoba Bhave to work for land reform. He went from Marxism to democratic socialism, then decided "to withdraw from party-and-power politics and to devote the rest of my life to the *bhoodan* and *sarvodaya* movement." (*Bhoodan* means "gift of land," and *sarvodaya*, "the good of all," was the movement for village reconstruction organized by Gandhi.) JP wrote:

The same old beacon-lights of freedom, equality and brotherhood that had guided the course of my life and brought me to democratic socialism, drew me onwards around this turning of the road. My regret is that I did not reach this point in my life's journey while Gandhi was still in our midst. However, some years back it became clear to me that socialism as we understand it today cannot take mankind to the sublime goals of freedom, equality, brotherhood and peace. Socialism, no doubt, gives promise to bring mankind closer to those goals than any other competing social philosophy. But I am persuaded

that unless socialism is transformed into *sarvodaya*, those goals would remain beyond its reach; and just as we had to taste the ashes of independence, so generations may have to taste the ashes of socialism.

Describing his own experience, he said:

The party system with the corroding and corrupting struggle for power in it, disturbed me more and more. I saw how parties backed by finance, organization and the means of propaganda could impose themselves on the people, how people's rule became in effect party rule; how party rule in turn became the rule of a caucus or coterie; how democracy was reduced to mere casting of votes; how even this right of vote was restricted severely by the system of powerful parties setting up their candidates from whom alone, for all practical purposes, the voters had to make their choice, however, this limited choice was made unreal by the fact that the issues posed before the electorate were by and large incomprehensible to it. The party system as I saw it was emasculating the people. It did not function so as to develop their strength and initiative, nor to help them establish their self-rule and to manage their affairs themselves. . . .

Democratic socialists had no doubt talked vaguely of decentralization of power. . . . But in practice I found that their entire concern was, as it still is, with the capture of power. They seem to believe that even decentralization of power was possible only after the present centers of power had been conquered, so that decentralization and de-institutionalization could then be legislated into being. They do not see the absurdity of this procedure. Decentralization cannot be effected by handing down power from above to people who have been politically emasculated and whose capacity for self-rule has been thwarted, if not destroyed, by the party system and concentration of power at the top.

Jayaprakash resolved to play no more part in the fictions of this system, turning instead to the Gandhian movement. He gave this explanation for his decision:

A question might be raised here why it should ever be suspected that Gandhiji, who had devoted his whole life to politics, should have at all thought of an alternative to it. In my humble opinion Gandhiji never had anything to do with politics in the sense I am considering here. The movement for freedom that Gandhiji led was "political" in the sense that its goal was the national independence of India; it was not

"politics" in the sense that it was a struggle for Power for any particular party. If its aim was power, it was power for the entire Indian people, including those who separated to form Pakistan and for all the parties that existed, or were to be formed in the future in both Indias. Gandhiji was not a party leader fighting and maneuvering for power for *his* party. Had it been so it could never have occurred to him to ask the Congress to quit the field of power politics. He was a national leader fighting for the freedom of his country: nay, he was a world leader of humanity working to free his fellow-men from bondage. The Indian freedom movement was a people's movement *par excellence*. It was not *rajniti* (politics of the state) but *lokniti* (politics of the people) .

Curiously, it was Mohandas K. Gandhi, so often charged with blue sky utopianism beyond the capacity of human nature, who did more than anyone in the twentieth century to remove fiction from the idea of government. He rejected power—power in the form of the British colonial government, power as a revolutionary goal, and power for the government of a free India. In what is probably the best review of Attenborough's famous film, *Gandhi*, George Woodcock puts his finger on the flaws of the film in a way that does not diminish the excellence of Ben Kingsley's extraordinary performance of Gandhi, yet makes clear how the fiction of the importance of (the Indian) government is perpetuated. According to Woodcock, the producer received some \$10,000,000 from Mrs. Indira Gandhi, with the result that any criticism of the state of India is omitted. (Woodcock wrote his review for the *Spring Open Road*, Box 6135, Station G, Vancouver, B.C., Canada V6R 4G5, and it was reprinted in the May 7 anarchist fortnightly, *Freedom*, from which we quote.) We are given, Woodcock says, "no inkling of the doubts Gandhi experienced and expressed after India became independent." Moreover—

Nothing is said about his warnings that the Congress Party should be disbanded, its aim of India's liberation having been achieved, and replaced by a Lok Sevak Sangh (Organization for the Service of the People), which would eschew political power and devote itself to moral and social reform and to creating the kind of agrarian commonwealth Gandhi

had long advocated—a decentralized society based on the revivifying of the villages. Nothing is said about his warning that the "militarization of India would mean self-destruction." Nothing is said about his argument that "self-government means continuous effort to be free of government control, whether it is foreign or whether it is national" or of his assertion that "the ideally non-violent state will be an ordered anarchy."

Gandhi, in fact, wanted to create a libertarian and agrarian order, without an army and without a sense of national arrogance. He often called himself an anarchist, and in his vision of a village-based order, with a decentralized administration rather than government, he came very close to the ideals of Tolstoy and Kropotkin, both of whom he admired.

Woodcock points out that today the Congress Party is far from continuing the work begun by Gandhi, which has been "sustained outside the circles of power, by individual teachers and activists like Vinoba Bhave and Jayaprakash Narayan, and by movements like Sarva Seva, whose volunteers work outside the framework of government organization for the regeneration of village life." One more paragraph by Woodcock will serve as our conclusion:

Yet despite the distortions I have indicated, the crucial message of Gandhi's life was too strong and clear not to dominate the film, *Gandhi*. All power is vulnerable, and can in the long run be defeated by determined resistance. When governments and laws are manifestly unjust, direct action against them is necessary. But, since violence tends to be self-defeating and to lead to authoritarian structures, the best kind of direct action is non-violent resistance by civil disobedience and by non-cooperation. Such resistance, unlike violence, provides also the philosophic foundation for a society in which excesses of power can be eliminated.

This seems a large part of the truth underlying the fiction and make-believe of government. That truth may still be a kind of fiction today, but it can be turned into moral reality. Power and central authority cannot.

## *REVIEW*

### ECONOMICS FOR CITIZENS

PAUL HAWKEN'S *The Next Economy* (Holt, Rinehart & Winston, \$14.50)—to which MANAS has given brief attention in a recent lead article—is a book that can be read in several ways. You can read it as a sagacious anticipation of the changes in store for the country as a whole, bringing to the foreground some that, while largely unnoticed, are already on the way. This is a conventional approach, not without value, but commonly addressed to an audience that is expected to do little but listen, watch, deplore, and perhaps vote differently in the next election.

But you can also read it as a personal decision-maker, one who either becomes a protagonist of the right changes, or an antagonist who is likely to make the effect of the changes—which are inevitable—more painful to himself and everyone else. Hawken is himself a businessman—"the only economics writer who is," as Stewart Brand points out in a jacket blurb—and he guides his business by the understanding his writing displays. The book, in short, has as much meaning for individuals as for national planners—meaning that individuals can act upon in ways compatible with the changes as they proceed. Reading it is much more than a spectator activity.

Finally, *The Next Economy* can be read as an indicator of slowly awakening moral awareness in the people of the country—an aspect which appears only in infrequent asides and with the restraint one finds in philosophic works by exceptional leading scientists.

What does Hawken say about the future—within five or ten years? He ends the chapter on the implications of the growing national debt by saying:

I do not think we will see a repetition of Black Tuesday or of 1929, Yet few adults alive today have a working memory of the events that led up to the credit collapse and the Depression, so it is useful to

remind ourselves that spiraling debt and ignorance of its consequences have always precipitated financial panics, collapses, and depressions throughout the world. I have faith that we can extricate ourselves from the dilemma of soaring debt and expensive capital costs. But it won't be done by inventing "lily-flower phrases" that inspire deeper indebtedness. It will be done slowly and carefully by realizing that much of our supposed wealth does not exist, that the United States will require a long period of restrained consumption, increased production, and self-reliance in order to reduce debt to manageable levels. There is no way to predict whether the future will bring disflation (the downward movement of inflation rates) and high interest rates, renewed in political decisions. We may well alternate in whipsaw fashion from one to the other or suffer a decade of grinding liquidation of our debt, which would mean severe economic dislocation, insolvency, and economic restructuring. Either way, the greatest flexibility is gained by not being in debt.

The heart of the matter, for Paul Hawken, is the price of oil. When he speaks of the "next" economy, he means an economy which will no longer operate on the same principle as the mass economy of the past, which grew to its present dimensions when oil was cheap. Cheap energy plus ingenious technological ways of putting it to productive work brought enormous growth of both goods and services available at low cost. People acquired the habit of having nearly everything they wanted, with "always more" as the goal. Survival will mean breaking this habit, it will mean putting intelligence in its place, so that we can become used to having less and even liking it, and distinguishing between wants and actual needs. It will mean buying only things which last longer because of the "intelligence" built into them—in a word, quality. Hawken makes this summary:

The mass economy has peaked because cheap energy, the underlying driving force, is gone. Productivity is falling because rising productivity depended almost solely on our ability to gain access to inexpensive energy. Energy costs have soared because the demand for fuel by a continually growing mass economy finally confronted the inherent limitations of the earth to supply that energy cheaply. And people, seeing that the future may not bring

higher wages and lower-priced goods, are buying the products that save them from having to rebuy later at a higher price. Much of the business community in the United States, having misread the future, took the wrong road. The future of America now belongs to individuals and companies, large and small, that understand the shift in emphasis from mass to information and can meet it.

This means that many jobs will be lost in the old industries of the mass economy, and particularly in those companies that have not adapted during the last decade to the new relationship among labor, capital, and energy. Professor M. Harvey Brenner of Johns Hopkins University recently told a House subcommittee that "The most important difference between this recession and most others is that it reflects structural change in the economy. Many workers in the extractive and manufacturing sectors are not going to find re-employment at their old jobs, nor are their sons and daughters or younger brothers and sisters going to find work careers in these . . . industries." In other words, the very industries that provided the mass economy with its impetus and muscle—steel, automobiles, and durable goods—are contracting.

The book has chapters on the economic processes of the past, the present, and the future. Those on the past and the present are filled with practical illustrations of what the author says. The ones on the future have fewer illustrations, although he gives examples of companies which have begun to go in the right direction, with figures from their annual statements to prove that it works. Passages about the Japanese economy show how the Japanese *adapted* to the shortage of petroleum—of which they have none—and learned how to produce better goods with less energy, and in this way gain markets no longer available to U.S. manufacturers. Japanese cars, which are well made and last longer, can be bought at a saving of 25 per cent.

The future economy, Hawken says, will be the information economy—offering products which have understanding of human needs and capacity to pay built into them.

What about agriculture? Mass economy agriculture is industrialized agriculture. We have,

as Hawken and others point out, turned our farms into mines, using up the fertility of the land while putting off the day of reckoning by adding more mechanization—bigger tractors—and more petroleum-based fertilizers. Fertilizer usage, the author says, "increased 600 per cent between 1950 and 1980." In the U.S. farmers expend 10 calories of energy for every calorie of food that is harvested, while the Chinese farmer uses only one calorie for the same return. Which system is more likely to last? As Hawken says:

While the United States does not want to go back to a labor-intensive agriculture to save energy, U.S. farmers are faced with the prospect of continually higher operating costs and dwindling profits. However, the world is making more people, not more land. Our only hope of supplying sufficient amounts of food for ourselves and others is to have more people on the land working ever more productively.

Having more people on the land flies in the face of conventional wisdom about the benefits of increasing mechanization but conforms closely to the idea of an informative economy. For food production to increase and the land to regain its fertility, there will have to be a shift in the ratio of mass to information. Mass is represented by land and energy; information by intelligence, technique, and people. Smaller, more intensively worked farms are considered a romantic notion. It was Secretary of Agriculture Earl Butz under President Nixon, who advised American farmers to "get big or get out." But during the past three years, many of the big farmers who got big got out, bankrupted by the high cost of capital, while conservative farmers who stayed small and kept their debts low survived.

In no other area is the effect of the change in the character of the economy more dramatic:

What made American farmers the most productive in the world is now threatening to put them out of business: abundant energy. From a labor-intensive livelihood, farming has become a capital- and energy-intensive industry that requires the investment of large amounts of capital and energy into the land and obtains high yields in return. But like big industry, farmers have been fooled. By putting so much capital into energy-intensive machinery and technologies, they are being driven into insolvency.

What can individuals do in situations such as these? They can, Hawken says, go back to doing things as we used to, while retaining the spin-offs of efficient technique developed in recent years. This helps to shift the ratio of mass to information in our own lives, making that shift attractive to suppliers. This individual response to the stagnation of the mass economy and the high cost of living "can mean simplifying one's life; making compost out of kitchen scraps instead of having a garbage disposal; having a garden; sewing at home."

It can mean a return to barter: exchanging items at swap meets; a baby-sitter co-op; or trading professional services. It can mean cutting back on consumption: eating lower on the food chain by eliminating excessive quantities of meat; not buying processed foods; bicycling instead of driving.



## *COMMENTARY* WANTS AND VALUES

A GEM which had to be cut from the tail-end of this week's "Children" article (providing its title) is something quoted by David Holbrook from George Sampson's *English for the English*, published in England in 1921:

"School time," he urged, "must not be regarded merely as a prelude to life; it is part of the act of living—it is practice rather than preparation." . . . "It is the purpose of education," he proclaimed, "not to prepare children *for* their occupations, but to prepare children against their occupations."

This seems like a subversive proposal, and indeed it is. After all, very nearly every good teacher is in some sense a subversive, so far as the way things are now. But the problem is by no means limited to the schools. Paul Hawken's *The Next Economy* is also subversive. The last paragraph of this week's Review (page 8), could be indefinitely extended.

It will mean buying cars from makers who don't believe in "planned obsolescence"—cars which are smaller, use less gas, and last longer—and dozens of other commonsense measures, many of which are already in operation and which Hawken lists.

Paul Hawken is an example and an exponent of what used to be called "Yankee ingenuity." This quality has been submerged by the mass economy, but happily not yet lost. He may not say all that he thinks in this book—some of his fears might be too discouraging—but what he does say will work and needs to be done.

Change is in the air, and directions or suggestions for change are in a lot of good books and magazines. But for most of us, the prospect of change is both inviting and unsettling. How can we keep what ought to be kept, distinguishing it from what needs to be changed?

This is a philosophical problem, since it is an issue of values. Are we able to distinguish

between wants and values? Gandhi once said to Richard Gregg:

As long as you derive inner help and comfort from anything, you should keep it. If you were to give it up in a mood of self-sacrifice or out of a stern sense of duty, you would continue to want it back. Only give up a thing when you want some other condition so much that the thing no longer has any attraction for you, or when it seems to interfere with that which is more greatly desired.

## CHILDREN ... and Ourselves

### PART OF THE ACT OF LIVING

THE faith of the modern world in the skills of technology may be faltering, but the reliance of education on the techniques of teaching seems to go on with very little questioning. Yet questioning does take place. Last June we quoted here from a paper in the Spring *American Scholar* on teaching reading and writing by E.D. Hirsch Jr., who said:

The current curriculum guide to the study of English in the state of California is a remarkable document. In its several pages of advice to teachers I do not find the title of a single recommended work. Such "curricular guides" are produced on the theory that the actual contents of English courses are simply vehicles for inculcating formal skills, and that contents are left to local choice. . . . An illustrative list put out by the state would imply official sanction of the cultural and ideological values expressed by the works on the list. The California Education Department is not in the business of imposing cultures and ideologies. Its business is to inculcate "skills" and "positive self-concepts," regardless of the students' cultural backgrounds.

This very nearly says all that needs to be said, yet the comments on the stress of technique, by C.A. Bowers, in the Spring *Teachers College Record*, add substance:

The current crisis in public education is, according to Hannah Arendt, partly the result of the progressive separation of teaching techniques from the material that is to be taught. This tendency to view technique as a separate area of investigation and development leads to the "reform from above" approach that has characterized American education over the past decade. This technicist pattern of thinking assumes that techniques (classroom management systems, learning packages, etc.) can be applied in a variety of socio-cultural contexts, and that the intelligence built into the technique, system, and learning package would compensate for the inability of the classroom teacher to exercise intelligent judgment. This approach is, I believe, fundamentally wrong, as it ignores the importance of local context and the ability of teachers to combine a

rich fund of tacit knowledge gained from the past experience of teaching with the kind of intelligence that is required in negotiating the complex relationships that characterize a typical classroom. The tendency to view teaching as a technique that can be progressively refined by experts also fails to take account of a more general characteristic of the educational process, which is essentially that of transmitting at an abstract level the culture to the young. . . . An approach to teacher education that takes seriously the problem of empowering the classroom teacher (which is, I believe, one of the unresolved problems causing the more intellectually oriented teachers to leave the classroom) would involve an approach fundamentally different from the technicist approach . . . I would argue that if teachers do not understand the part of the culture they are attempting to transmit, including its underlying assumptions, they will be forced to mask behind the technical jargon that is supposed to certify their professional status the fact that they cannot take the student beyond the taken-for-granted beliefs of the textbooks, and their own past socialization.

Since Prof. Bowers cites Hannah Arendt as a source of this criticism, we went to the book he names, *Between Past and Future*, happily on our shelf, and found:

Under the influence of modern psychology and the tenets of pragmatism, pedagogy has developed into a science of teaching in general in such a way as to be wholly emancipated from the actual material to be taught. A teacher, so it was thought, is a man who can simply teach anything; his training is in teaching, not the mastery of any particular subject. This attitude, as we shall presently see, is naturally very closely connected with a basic assumption about learning. Moreover, it has resulted in recent decades in a most serious neglect of the training of teachers in their own subjects, especially in the public high schools. Since the teacher does not need to know his own subject, it not infrequently happens that he is just one hour ahead of his class in knowledge. This in turn means not only that the students are actually left to their own resources, but that the most legitimate source of the teacher's authority as the person who, turn it whatever way one will, still knows more and can do more than oneself is no longer effective. Thus the non-authoritarian teacher, who would like to abstain from all methods of compulsion because he is able to rely on his own authority, can no longer exist.

One thing might be added here: The *enthusiasm* of the teacher for his subject is the most valuable teaching instrument he has. Actually, he is not there to "teach a subject" half so much as he is there to arouse in his pupils, by whatever means, the hunger to know. Technique is of little or no use for this purpose. Rather, technique is usually the formal enemy of enthusiasm.

Two more paragraphs by Hannah Arendt on the responsibility of teachers invite attention:

Insofar as the child is not yet acquainted with the world he must be gradually introduced to it; insofar as he is new, care must be taken that this new thing comes to fruition in relation to the world as it is. In any case, however, the educators here stand in relation to the young as representatives of a world for which they must assume responsibility although they themselves did not make it, and even though they may, secretly or openly, wish it were other than it is. This responsibility is not arbitrarily imposed upon educators; it is implicit in the fact that the young are introduced by adults into a continuously changing world. Anyone who refuses to assume joint responsibility for the world should not have children and must not be allowed to take part in educating them.

In education this responsibility for the world takes the form of authority. The authority of the educator and the qualifications of the teacher are not the same thing. Although a measure of qualification is indispensable for authority, the highest possible qualification can never by itself beget authority. The teacher's qualification consists in knowing the world and being able to instruct others about it, but his authority rests on his assumption of responsibility for that world. Vis-à-vis the child it is as though he were a representative of all adult inhabitants, pointing out the details and saying to the child: This is our world.

In "The Creative Approach to English Teaching," also in the *Spring Teachers College Record*, David Holbrook tells about his work with children thought to be "unpromising."

If we put this in abstract terms, it often tends to sound rather portentous. In the classroom, in everyday work, it is really a very simple thing. It is a little poem like this, written by a very plain girl of fourteen:

A little yellow bird sat on my window sill  
 He hop and popped about  
 He whistled, he chirped.  
 I tried to catch my little yellow bird  
 But he flew into the golden yellow sun.  
 Oh, how I wish that was my yellow bird!

This child, I remember, was the kind of child about whom the teacher feels, "Oh dear, I am never going to get anything out of you!" She wore thick pebble glasses, and was timid and slow. On her report card it was written, "Has no originality or imagination." That seemed the end of that. But it is not true of any human being, that they have "no originality or imagination."

## *FRONTIERS* "Never the Villager"

OF the making of books on peace there is no end. What, it may be wondered, do they accomplish? One that has come our way recently is *Planet III—Your World in a Capsule*, written by Dr. Bart H. Saucelo, and issued by the World Peace Academy, 2254 Portage Avenue, South Bend, Indiana 46616. The core idea of this slight volume is an elliptical structure ten stories high, covering a hundred acres with "an air supported translucent roof." The central part of this model city is to be an exhibit something like a world's fair, with cultural and industrial exhibits from all parts of the world. This center will be surrounded by a ring of stores, offices, banks, restaurants, motels, and medical, educational, and cultural facilities. The outer ring will be residential—an "international village with about 10,000 residents" who work in the city, while others will give their time to world peace activities. Everything will be "up-to date." There will be parks, golf courses, tennis courts, a lake for swimming and boating. Transport will be on moving sidewalks, with room for 10,000 cars to park in the outer rim. The whole thing will cost only \$750 million, compared to the \$21.3 billion it took to put astronauts on the moon.

In one place the author says:

As an earthlab, Planet III will function like a huge magnet. It will attract people from all countries. Once inside they will intensify the process of "people-to-people" contact, which will then result in greater international understanding.

Peace ideas, research and education from all over the world will be gathered, coordinated, integrated and accelerated in Planet III which would then result in a stronger world opinion against war.

Research and educational activities consisting of seminars and conferences as well as formal classroom training programs will be conducted by the World Peace Academy under the auspices of the International Association of Educators for World Peace. . . .

Every night will be an international night. . . . The world's best of the performing arts will also be shown at regular intervals. International "fast food" will be available. All these activities will result in a "sense of world community," making anyone going through Planet III feel closer to the family of nations.

The World Peace Academy, "a nonprofit charitable organization established to spearhead an aggressive and continuing drive for a world without war," would mobilize anti-war opinion and "serve as a research and educational center for the elimination of war."

Where, one wonders, would the "researchers" of this institution look first for the principles of peace-making? Surely, sooner or later, they would be led to investigate the ideas of the men and women who have in the past exercised the greatest influence toward the rejection of war as the means of settling international differences and conflicts. There have been a number of such people, the most eminent, probably, being Tolstoy and Gandhi. Conceivably, among them would be Thomas a Kempis, who said that "All men desire peace, but few men desire those things that make for peace."

What, then, are the things that make for peace?

Tolstoy wrote again and again on this subject. He said that for peace no organizations, no conferences, no institutions are necessary. The one thing, he said, that will put an end to war is for men to refuse to fight. There is a book which collects these utterances—Tolstoy's *Writings on Civil Disobedience and Non-Violence* (Bergman, 1967).

Gandhi was forthright concerning the social order that makes for peace. He wrote in *Harijan* in 1939:

I suggest that, if India is to evolve along non-violent lines, it will have to decentralize many things. Centralization cannot be sustained and defended without adequate force. Simple homes from which there is nothing to take away require no policing; the palaces of the rich must have strong guards to protect them. . . . So must huge factories. . . . You cannot

build non-violence on a factory civilization. . . . Rural economy as I have conceived it, eschews exploitation altogether. You have to be rural-minded before you can be nonviolent.

"There are," Gandhi wrote for a newspaper in 1944, "two schools of thought current in the world. One wants to divide the world into cities and the other into villages. The village civilization and the city civilization are totally different things." Speaking of social objectives, he said:

In well-ordered society the securing of one's livelihood should be and is found to be the easiest thing in the world. Indeed, the test of orderliness in a country is not the number of millionaires it owns, but the absence of starvation among its masses. The only statement that has to be examined is, whether it can be laid down as a law of universal application that material advancement means moral progress.

The researchers would find many lines of investigation charted in Gandhi's writings. And if their purpose is to reveal the requisites of *world peace* they might find it to the point to put up posters with texts from Lappé and Collins' *Food First* on the walls of the "fast food" eating places. A similar use might be made of the first paragraph of an article in *Environment* for last April, "Rainforests and the Hamburger Society," which begins:

Few Americans associate fast food hamburgers or TV dinners with the eradication of Central America's tropical rainforests. But for more than 30 years, the United States' appetite for cheap, imported beef has been a critical factor in the future of those forests. Tropical rainforests throughout Central America (including Southeastern Mexico and Panama) are being replaced by pasturelands to produce beef, much of which is consumed by U.S. citizens.

As a result, the land is depleted of nutrients and erodes into wasteland after seven or ten years. The indigenous (Indian) inhabitants of the forests are displaced and the per capita consumption of beef in these areas drops while export of beef soars. Poor Central Americans have less to eat and no place to grow their own food. An American housecat, the writers say, "eats more beef than the average Central American." While

the international banks which supply credit for beef cattle production sometimes claim they are helping to close the "nutrition gap" in Central America, in fact they are facilitating "the export of high-quality food from the region" and converting agricultural land to the production of export crops, thus "compounding the problem of malnutrition."

Finally, would the Planet III super-city be able to attract to its classes and lectures any of the youthful Thoreaus, Tolstoys, and Gandhis that may be coming along? Would they come to "a model city showing the newest methods of transportation, communication and housing"? Or would they more likely turn up at or try to make for themselves a village with the qualities of which Gandhi dreamed? "It is the city man," Gandhi wrote, "who is responsible for war all over the world, never the villager."

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